

House Wren

House Wren

Appearance

A rather small, slender bird that is brown in color. With a longish tail and short wings, both of which have fine dark barring.



Adult

Long slender bill that is slightly curved downward.
Overall body plumage is brown with fine black barring on the tail and wings.
Faint barring on the upper breast and undertail coverts.



Fledgling

Similar patterning as the adult showing black barring in the wings and tail.
Note the pale gape, where the upper and lower bill meet at their base.

House Wren Sounds

From The Cornell Lab of Ornithology <https://www.birds.cornell.edu/home/>

SONGS

Both males and females sing. Males songs are a long, jumbled, and bubbling, introduced by abrupt churrs and scolds and made up of 12-16 recognizable syllables. Females sing mainly in answer to their mates shortly after pairing up; their songs can include high-pitched squeals unlike any sounds that males make.

CALLS

House Wrens make a variety of harsh sounds: churrs, chatters, rattles, and scolds, often in response to large animals that might be predators.

Listen to the songs and calls at:

https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/House_Wren/sounds

House Wren

Diet

House Wrens are primarily insect eaters and will take any insects they can find. They will sometimes supplement their diet with berries in the fall when insects might be scarcer.



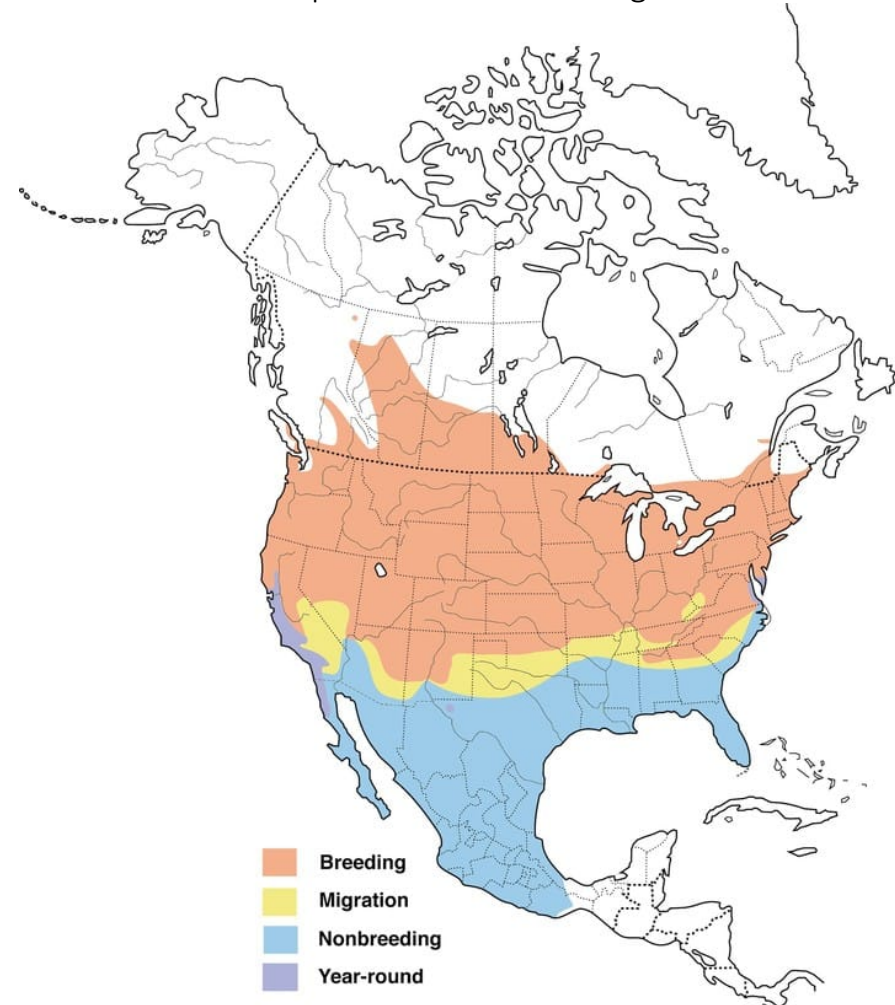
House Wren bringing a spider back to young in a bird house.



House Wrens include flying insects in their diet.

House Wren Range

House Wrens arrive mid-April and remain through to the end of October.



House Wren Habitat

House Wrens are a cavity-nesting species and will use manmade structures as well as natural tree cavities.



House Wren attending to young in a manmade bird house.



House Wren exploring a natural tree cavity.

House Wren

Behavior

Bubbly and energetic, just like their songs. House Wrens hop quickly through tangles and low branches. In spring and summer, they frequently pause to sing from where they are well-hidden or from where they can be clearly seen on a high perch. They often have their tail cocked upwards.



House Wrens regularly forage in dense brush and tangle in the understory.



House Wrens are not shy and will find an open perch to sing in hopes of attracting a mate, and to proclaim their territory.

House Wren Behavior

The male House Wren will establish a territory and build several basic nests within that territory in the hopes of attracting a mate. The female will then select one of the nest sites and complete the nest building process. Both will incubate the eggs and raise their young.



The male House Wren will attend to several potential nesting sites within its territory.



The female House Wren will ultimately decide which nest site suits her best and will finalize nest construction.

House Wren Literature/Prose

The wren and the nightingale sound nothing alike,
but think how dull the world would be without the songs of both birds.

by Miss Kanagawa

He who shall hurt the little wren shall never be beloved by men.

by William Blake



House Wren Feeders

On rare occasions, House Wrens will visit bird feeders stocked with meal worms.



House Wren grabbing an easy meal of a meal worm.

House Wren Names

Common name House Wren

The House Wren is found from Canada to southernmost South America, and it is thus the most widely distributed bird in the Americas. It occurs in most suburban areas in its range and it is the single most common wren which is willing to nest in close proximity to humans, hence the name *House*.



Photos: Rachel Ames (left),
Missouri Department of Conservation (right)

Scientific name *Troglodytes aedon*

Troglodytes aedon, describes the House Wren's genus and voice.

Troglodytes: Greek meaning "cave dwelling."
aedon: Greek meaning "nightingale" (as in song)

